

CLAIMS

1. A radiant electric heating element comprising a base plate, a first ceramic track printed on at least one face of the base plate, an electrically conductive heating track printed on the surface of the first ceramic track lying remote from the base plate, and a second ceramic track printed on the heating track thus with the first ceramic track to surround and seal the heating track, terminal means being connected to the heating track for connecting same to a supply of electrical power.
2. A radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, wherein both ceramic tracks are wider than the heating track.
3. A radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, wherein the combined ceramic and heating tracks follow a meander pattern to cover a substantial area of the base plate.
4. A radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, wherein a ceramic layer is printed or coated onto the face of the base plate remote from the ceramic and heating tracks.

5. A radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, wherein the combined ceramic and heating tracks are printed on opposed faces of the base plate.
6. A radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, wherein multiple combined ceramic and heating tracks are printed on opposed faces of the base plate.
7. A radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, wherein the first and second ceramic tracks are formed from the same material.
8. A radiant electric heating element according to any preceding claim, wherein the base plate is of stainless steel.
9. A method of producing a radiant electric heating element, comprising the steps of providing a base plate, printing a first ceramic track on at least one face of the base plate, printing an electrically conductive heating track on the surface of the first ceramic track lying remote from the base plate, such that the heating track is electrically insulated therefrom, printing a second ceramic track on the heating track so that with the first ceramic track the heating track is surrounded and sealed by the first and second ceramic tracks, and

providing terminal means for connection of the heating track to a supply of electrical power.

10. A method according to Claim 9, wherein the base plate is cleaned to ensure that the surface thereof is free of any contaminants, before printing thereon of the first ceramic track.
11. A method according to Claim 9, wherein the combined ceramic and heating tracks are printed on opposed faces of the base plate.
12. A method according to Claim 9, wherein multiple combined ceramic and heating tracks are printed on opposed faces of the base plate.
13. A toast making appliance comprising at least one radiant electric heating element according to Claim 1, including means for supporting at least one slice of bread in close proximity to the heating element, even in direct contact therewith.
14. A toast making appliance according to Claim 13, wherein a pair of radiant electric heating elements according to Claim 1, are placed in mutually parallel relationship, means being provided to enable adjustment of the distance between said parallel pair of elements.

15. A toast making appliance according to Claim 13 or Claim 14, including a browning sensor.
16. A toast making appliance according to Claim 15, wherein said browning sensor is an infra-red emitter-receiver scanning detector.
17. A toast making appliance according to Claim 16, including means to auto-zero the scanning detector before each toasting operation, thus to provide browning control of breads having different initial colours.